

(e) These blocks are under exploration phase. ONGC has notified discoveries in deepwater block, KG-DWN-98/2. However, the commercial potential of these discoveries is yet to be established. The annual oil & gas production can only be assessed depending upon commerciality of these discoveries and development plan to be undertaken thereafter.

ONGC's petrochemical project

2979. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRICHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of petrochemicals project proposed to be set up by ONGC in MRPL; and

(b) the zero date of the project alongwith completion time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) Board has accorded approval for upgradation of Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), a subsidiary of ONGC from its existing capacity of 9.69 million metric tonne per annum (MMTPA) to 15 MMTPA. The ONGC Board has also approved the setting up of an aromatic complex to manufacture Paraxylene (PX) from the additional quantity of Naphtha that would be available consequent upon the upgradation.

(b) The project is expected to go on stream by the end of 2010.

Purchase of bio-diesel

†2980. SHRI SAN JAY RAUT:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that PSU Oil Companies could not purchase bio-diesel product since last one year;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, what are the reasons behind non-procuring of bio-diesel;
- (c) whether Government are considering to provide direct financial help to the bio-diesel producer-farmer;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (e) if not, what are the main reasons in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Public Sector Undertaking, Oil Marketing Companies have not been able to purchase bio-diesel at the identified purchase centres so far, as the parties who have expressed interest are not willing to supply at the declared price. Facilities are not yet ready with other parties who have expressed their interest.

(c) to (e) The Ministry of Rural Development has proposed to launch a National Mission on Bio-diesel, which is to be implemented in two phase i.e. Phase-I as Demonstration Project and Phase-II, a self sustaining expansion of Bio-phase Programme. Under the Demonstration phase of the Mission, plantations of Tree Borne Oilseeds (TBOs) like Jatropha and pongamia would be taken up essentially on degraded forest lands and wastelands belonging to the village communities/panchayats/government. It is not contemplated to involve private land owners/farmers in the mission activities at this stage. Since there is no reliable and tested database on various aspects of jatropha cultivation and costs and returns involved, Research & Development (applicable to both planting and processing), would also be an important and significant component of the Demonstration Phase.

Co-operation with US in oil sector

2981. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Washington has offered New Delhi a role in its efforts at framing a response to the volatility in the global oil and gas market, and also pushing for upscaling Government framework for co-operation in coal sector;